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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 ANKARA 002018

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [UNSC](#) [TU](#)

SUBJECT: [TURKEY](#): MFA'S AFRICA DEPARTMENT RAMPING UP FOR UNSC

REF: A. ANKARA 1384

[B](#). ANKARA 1364

[C](#). ANKARA 1307

[D](#). ANKARA 953

[E](#). ANKARA 148

Classified By: POL Counselor Daniel O'Grady, for reasons 1.4 (b,d)

[1](#)1. (C) Summary and Comment: The MFA's Africa Department (AFGY) is ramping up its efforts to prepare for Turkey's rapidly approaching 2009-2011 non-permanent UNSC tenure. While MFA leadership has not determined how the decision-making process will work, the three-man department is taking nascent steps to identify issues Turkey will face as a voting member and has increased coordination with its UN Mission and Embassies in sub-Saharan Africa. AFGY, like the Americas and East Asian Departments, is understaffed and stretched thin already trying to facilitate Turkey's rapidly expanding bilateral engagement with the region. Given the MFA's overall inexperience and, as one African diplomat characterized, a general mix of "arrogance and ignorance" in Turkish leadership's approach toward the continent, proactive U.S. engagement in New York, Washington, and Ankara is crucial to getting the GOT up to speed on issues which constitute the lion's share of UNSC resolutions. End Summary and Comment.

[1](#)2. (C) Reflecting increased Turkish engagement with the region, MFA Africa Section Chief Aykut Kumbaroglu told us the MFA is discussing augmenting its Africa Department to better accommodate the imminent UNSC work load (reftels). Noting the GOT plans eventually to open 15 new African missions, Kumbaroglu said that it would be hard for AFGY (comprised of a department head, section chief, and junior officer) to manage both Turkey's enhanced relations and the UNSC without additional staff.

[1](#)3. (C) AFGY has already begun to study UNSC-related African issues and has reached out to its UN mission and embassies for additional information. Kumbaroglu reported that his office has a history of working directly with New York on UNGA resolutions, a practice he predicts will continue. Despite ongoing AFGY preparations for January, he told us his department had not yet received guidance from MFA leadership on the UNSC decision making process. However, based on past experiences, Kumbaroglu (please protect) speculated most policies would be made at the highest levels with the departments only finding out afterward.

[1](#)4. (SBU) Although Turkey has traditionally focused its humanitarian and development assistance on Central Asia and the Balkans, Africa is the fastest growing recipient region for Turkish aid (ref d). Since 2005, the Turkish

International Cooperation and Development Agency (TIKA) has provided humanitarian assistance to 32 sub-Saharan countries and opened regional Program Coordination Offices in Ethiopia, Sudan, and Senegal. In 2006, TIKA implemented 236 projects in Africa (including the Maghreb), totaling over USD 24.8 million.

15. (C) The GOT recently announced it will open missions in Ghana, Tanzania, the Ivory Coast, Cameroon, Mali, Niger, Angola, Chad, Mozambique, and Madagascar. (Note: The MFA has identified the remaining 5 missions, including Mauritania, but will not release the information until after final approval.) Kumburoglu said the MFA examined a variety of factors when making the final decision, primarily a more even distribution of regional accreditation (some Turkish Embassies in Africa cover up to 10 countries), humanitarian assistance needs, established bilateral relations and diplomatic representation in Ankara, and Turkish business presence. Although the Turkish footprint will expand, he noted that the new missions will likely be similar to existing ones, staffed by an ambassador plus one additional diplomat.

16. (C) While the GOT has not developed its UNSC Africa policies (nor does it have a comprehensive bilateral policy toward most sub-Saharan nations), Kumburoglu provided the following background on several key African issues:

#### Sudan

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Turkey's bilateral relationship with Sudan, including two controversial visits by Sudanese President Bashir in 2008, is one of its best established in sub-Saharan Africa (refs b,e).

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The GOT claims a neutral position in Sudan's domestic politics and has reportedly called upon all Sudanese factions to reach an amicable power sharing solution. Turkey has an active business community in Sudan (including energy interests), a factor that plays a key role in growing ties. The GOT supports a UN presence in Sudan. Turkey contributes forces to two UN peace keeping efforts -- UNMIS (3 troops, 34 police) and UNAMID (1 troop, 4 police).

#### MINURCAT

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The GOT supports the deployment of UN forces in Central African Republic and Chad to assist with Darfur refugees. European capitals have reportedly demarched the MFA requesting Turkish participation. Given Turkey's UNMIS and UNAMID contributions and additional humanitarian assistance earmarked for Darfur (ref b,d), it is "difficult" for the GOT to consider committing troops or police to MINURCAT.

#### Somalia

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The GOT supports the Transitional Federal Government's (TFG) efforts to support peace and security. Bilaterally, Turkey has growing ties with Somalia. In June, Somalia opened an embassy in Ankara. To facilitate Turkish humanitarian efforts in Somalia, the GOT places significant importance on the security situation. (Note: Somali pirates have recently hijacked two Turkish vessels and abducted their crews, a fact that Kumburoglu notes will inevitably raise the importance of the issue for the GOT.)

#### Zimbabwe

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The GOT is closely monitoring the political situation in Zimbabwe, but has yet to develop a policy. The MFA believes that there is potential for compromise and Zimbabwe could follow in Kenya's footsteps in finding a peaceful resolution. However, like Bashir, the GOT continues to engage President Mugabe. In addition to extending an invitation to attend the Turkey-AU Summit in September hosted in Istanbul (ref a), President Gul met twice with Mugabe on the UNGA margins.

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